



DNRENEWS

Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment
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Fire Incident Report

Meridian Boundary Fire

May 20, 2010

1:00 p.m.

Incident Update 3

Media and Public Information Contact: DNRE Fire PIO 989-348-6371, ext. 7449
DNRE Media Chief 517-335-3014

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Current Status:

Location: South Branch Township, Crawford County

Size: Approximately 8,790 acres

Percent contained: 65 percent as of 6:00 a.m.

Injuries/Deaths: None

Evacuation Status: Evacuation order is still in effect.

Road closures: M-18 from M-72 to Roscommon County line is closed, several other roads in that vicinity are closed as well.

Structures Destroyed/Damaged: 12 residences destroyed; 2 residences damaged; 39 out-buildings destroyed or damaged.

Resources committed to incident:

Incident Commander: Paul Gaberdiel

Incident Command Center: DNRE Grayling Field Office

Total Personnel on Fire: 150 from DNRE, US Forest Service, and local volunteer fire departments.

Support from Crawford County Emergency Management Center, Crawford County Sheriff, and Michigan State Police.

Weather expected for Thursday, May 20: Hotter and drier conditions, but less wind.

Fire History:

Today on the Meridian Line Fire, crews continue to work on securing the line around the perimeter of the fire. Crews also started mop up on the hot spots around the perimeter. Firefighters continue to experience minor problems along the southern and western edges, but crews have been able to maintain the perimeter. Efforts are very focused on containment.

Fire was first spotted by a DNRE fixed wing aircraft at approximately 1:30 p.m. May 18. The point of origin has been determined and is being investigated. The cause was burning debris. Burn permits were being issued for this county on May 18.

The unburned areas in the northwest perimeter of the fire were updated on Wednesday night, increasing the acreage. Crews worked all night to improve the fire line. This does not mean fire is contained. As of 6 a.m. the fire remains 65 percent contained. The fire is approximately 6.5 miles long and 2.5 miles wide. The Incident commander is currently assessing the possibility of lifting some of the closed areas.

The fire is on state and federal forest land that is mostly jackpine, but it has entered a swampy area and a hardwoods area, which helped slow the fire's progress considerably.

Announcements/ Additional Information:

A public meeting was held on Wednesday, May 19th at the Grayling City Hall for residents and evacuees. Representatives from several agencies attended to answer questions and provide information.

M-18 remains closed from Stephan Bridge Road to M-72. Road and area closings are being assessed and will be re-opened as soon as safely allowed.

The following roads have blockades: Chase Bridge Rd., Willows Rd., Flooter Rd, CR-502, Meridian Rd. – all in Crawford County. Police will let residents through the barricade to pick up essential items, such as medication, if they show an identification to prove they live in the fire area.

Maps/Pictures:

Maps, photos and more information can be found at the DNRE website at www.michigan.gov/dnre.

Questions regarding the Range 9 Fire in Kalkaska County can be directed to Major Dawn Dancer of the Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs at 517-481-8140.

This report will be updated again on Friday, May 21' 2010 mid morning.